



Reducing Mosquitoes Around Your Home and Community

What can I do around my home to help reduce exposure to mosquitoes?

Mosquitoes lay their eggs in standing water. Weeds, tall grass, and bushes provide an outdoor home for the adult mosquito commonly associated with West Nile virus. Mosquitoes can enter homes through unscreened windows or doors, or broken screens. Here are some steps that you can take:

- Make sure that doors and windows have tight-fitting screens. Repair or replace all screens in your home that have tears or holes.
- Remove all discarded tires from your property. The used tire has become the most important domestic mosquito-breeding habitat in this country.
- Do not allow water-holding containers. Dispose of tin cans, plastic containers, ceramic pots, or similar water-holding containers. Do not overlook containers that have become overgrown by aquatic vegetation.
- Drill holes in the bottom of recycling containers that are left out of doors. Drainage holes that are located on the sides collect enough water for mosquitoes to breed in.
- Make sure roof gutters drain properly. Clean clogged gutters in the spring and fall.
- Tightly screen "rain barrels" to ensure mosquitoes can't deposit eggs in or on water.
- Clean and chlorinate swimming pools, outdoor hot tubs. If not in use, keep empty and covered.
- Drain water from pool covers.
- Aerate ornamental pools or stock them with fish. Water gardens are fashionable but become major mosquito producers if they are allowed to stagnate.
- Turn over wheelbarrows and change water in birdbaths at least twice weekly. Both provide breeding habitat for domestic mosquitoes
- Eliminate any standing water that collects on your property. Use landscaping as needed. Mosquitoes will develop in any puddle that last more than 4 days.
- Remind or help neighbors to eliminate breeding sites on their properties.

Please Note: Although certain pesticide products are available for sale in the market place to control mosquito larvae, one must obtain a special permit from the Department of Agriculture, Division of Pesticide Control to be able to apply pesticides to any surface waters in the state of New Hampshire. Questions regarding how to apply for such special permits may best be directed to the New Hampshire Department of Agriculture, Division of Pesticide Control at 603-271-3550.

What can I do to reduce my risk of becoming infected with West Nile virus?

When mosquitoes are active, take the following precautions:

- Protective clothing such as long pants, long-sleeved shirts, and socks should be worn if outside during evening, nighttime and dawn hours, (or whenever mosquitoes are biting), because that is the time when mosquitoes are most active and likely to bite.
- If outside during evening, nighttime and dawn hours, or whenever mosquitoes are biting, consider the use of an effective insect repellent. Repellants containing 10% or less DEET (N, N-diethyl-meta-toluamide) for children and no more than 30% DEET for adults have been proven effective.
- **USE DEET ACCORDING TO MANUFACTURER'S DIRECTIONS:**
 - Do not use DEET on infants or pregnant women. (Instead: avoid outdoor activities during peak biting times, wear covering clothing and use netting/screens to preclude mosquito bites.)
 - Do not allow young children to apply DEET themselves.
 - Do not apply DEET directly to children. Apply DEET to your own hands and then put it on the child.
 - Avoid putting on the hands of children or near their eyes and mouth.
 - Do not spray directly on the face, spray into the hands first and then apply to the face.
 - Do not apply to cuts, wounds, or irritated skin.
 - Do not use under clothing.
 - Do not spray DEET-containing products in enclosed areas.
 - DEET is effective for approximately four hours. Avoid prolonged or excessive use of DEET. Use sparingly to cover exposed skin and clothing.
 - Wash all treated skin and clothing after returning indoors.
 - Store DEET out of reach of children.
- Vitamin B, ultrasonic devices, incense and bug zappers have not been shown to be effective in preventing mosquito bites.

More information on mosquito repellents is available in a technical article for physicians at the New England Journal of Medicine website: <http://content.nejm.org/cgi/content/full/347/1/13>.

What health risks are posed to people and pets from pesticides?

If a community decides to use control measures such as pesticide application, the products that will be applied will be used according to integrated pest management guidelines set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. In the small amounts used, these pesticides would pose negligible risks to people and to pets. Residents will learn about spraying schedules through different mechanisms that may include public service announcements, the media, the DHHS /DES websites, a telephone information line and local authorities.

**For more information, call the
New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services,
West Nile Virus Information line
1-866-273-NILE (6453)**

For health care providers with clinical questions or to report human probable cases please contact the NH Communicable Disease Control Section at 1-800-852-3345 ext. 4496 or 603-271-4496